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Regional Workshop – Suva, Fiji

**Developing Knowledge Management Capacity for Improved
Agriculture Information, Research and Policy Banks in the Pacific**

31 May - 3 June, 2016



Workshop supported by: *The European Union (EU) supported Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP), implemented by the Land Resources Division (LRD) of the Pacific Community (SPC), in partnership with the ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA). PAPP is part of the Intra ACP program.*

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Summary

The *Regional Workshop on Developing Knowledge Management Capacity for Improved Agriculture Information, Research and Policy Banks in the Pacific* was a collaboration between the Pacific Community (SPC) and its European Union supported Pacific Agriculture Policy Project (PAPP) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA). It was held in Fiji, SPC Pasifika Room, 31 May to 3 June 2016.

More than 30 people attended the workshop, including SPC staff, plus additional speakers and special guests invited to join the knowledge management (KM) sessions. Participants from 10 of the 15 participating PAPP Pacific Island countries accepted the invitation to attend, specifically from Vanuatu, Tonga, Niue, Cook Islands, Solomon Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste, Fiji and Samoa. Participants included agriculture ministry staff plus many from the communications, information and ICT, and policy areas.

The four-day regional workshop aimed to assist participating countries to strengthen their knowledge management capacity to support access to national agricultural policy, research and market information. The workshop was the next part of a process that started last year in Vanuatu then Solomon Islands, with KM workshops leading to the development and launch of the country's individual Agriculture Policy Banks (APBs).



The workshop culminated on Day Four with a regional Showcase Event to highlight the benefits of the Agriculture Policy Banks, and was attended by more than 50 people from national and international organisations from across the Pacific.

Sessions within the workshop included a preliminary, two-hour Social Media Briefing followed by the official launch, then discussions about topics including knowledge management tools, opportunities and education; overviews of PAPP initiatives such as PAFNet and PIRAS; Agriculture Policy Bank survey results and insights; knowledge management concepts, and participant ideas for outreach to improve access to knowledge products.

In summary, this report provides details on the background and purpose for delivering this workshop, as well as key outcomes and actions including plans by more countries to launch their APBs, and to advocate for improved KM approaches across government, farmer organisations and private sector to contribute to improved information sharing and use of evidence-based data for decision making to grow the agriculture sector. A listing of participants and their workshop feedback is also detailed.

1.2 Background

Information accessibility and transparency is a key step in ensuring that stakeholders are engaged in designing, implementing and adopting plans and policies. While the concept of inclusiveness is well accepted, policy research for agriculture indicates a lack of information is available publicly for farmers, private sector, researchers and policy makers.

Information and knowledge management is a cornerstone for PAPP to support industry good practice on how to deliver better and more efficient services to its stakeholders. PAPP is looking at ways to build knowledge management capacity to ensure that the 15 target Pacific ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) countries understand the need to access and use policies, research and market information for better informed decision making. In addition, it is important that countries have access to capacity and technical support to take ownership of initiatives and drive improved information sharing. PAPP has undertaken a number of initiatives to promote information transparency for the important agriculture sector to better inform and engage all key stakeholders. These include a series of initial workshops for knowledge management and Agriculture Policy Banks, and this follow-up regional event.

1.3 Official Opening

Participants at the Regional Workshop were welcomed by SPC Deputy Director General, Dr Audrey Aumua, who commented that “knowledge management is about being smart and organised as to the way we manage information through ICT, mobile technology, social media and other tools that are now available and accessible to all of us. The DDG said a focus for the Regional Workshop is the recently launched Agricultural Policy Banks that are “a simple fix on what was a recurring problem for stakeholders – the inability to access documents and find out what the countries plans and priorities were for this important sector.”

Representing project partner was the coordinator of the Intra ACP Agricultural Policy Programme (Intra-ACP APP) at the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA), Samson Vilvil Fare. He explained how Intra-ACP APP recognizes that agriculture in the Pacific and Caribbean face similar challenges from climate change, natural disasters, small internal markets, heavy reliance on imports, and other factors. Therefore, there are benefits in fostering information sharing and mutual exchange between the Caribbean and the Pacific.

1.4 Group Photo



Caption: Participants pose during the pre-workshop Social Media Briefing. Photo by @S.Vilvilfare/CTA/SPC

2.0 WORKSHOP PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the workshop was to further assist participants invited from the ACP countries to improve their knowledge-sharing environment to disseminate agricultural information and knowledge within their countries, and to share national practices and lessons learned across countries. This workshop aimed to provide participants with an overview and practical demonstrations of knowledge sharing tools which can be utilised for increasing policy engagement and development in the Pacific, and with a focus on self-managing their respective country's Agriculture Policy Bank (APB). This responds to a need from participating countries for further technical support for their APBs, as part of the overall process for countries to manage policy and research information, knowledge tools and activities such as PAFNet e-discussions, KM scans, and other initiatives.

AGRICULTURE POLICY BANKS (APBS)

APBs are a simple yet innovative tool to help countries disseminate key policy information to farmers, business, policy makers, development partners, students and other stakeholders. So far the APBs have been launched with much success and publicity in Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, and will soon launch in Samoa and Tonga. To date, the APBs are already providing a much easier way to disseminate policy documents and information to all stakeholders. This Workshop was a key step in ensuring each country's APB is effective, given each participating country already has its own APB presence hosted on PAFNet.

2.2 Outcomes

By the end of the workshop the participants are able to:

- Lead management of their updated, national Agriculture Policy Bank (APB)
- Contribute to agriculture KM, ie initiate PAFNet e-discussions
- Understand the importance of KM and the KM Tree
- Be an advocate for knowledge sharing within & across countries
- Have practical skills and experience in using Social Media
- Be KM advocates upon returning to their home country.
- Identify people and their roles to support APBs and KM in-country.

2.3 Objectives

A key objective of the Workshop was to assist participants to update their respective country Agriculture Policy Bank (APB). Overall the workshop objectives were to:

- (i) Provide and update key agricultural content for the Agricultural Policy Banks
- (ii) Generate ideas for national outreach plans for agricultural policy and research;
- (iii) Share information on national and regional initiatives on knowledge sharing in the agricultural sector;
- (iv) Discuss the next steps for promoting KM and information sharing at the national and regional levels.
- (v) Understand the concept of knowledge management with the purpose of facilitating information sharing, innovation, good practices and lessons learned;
- (vi) Create awareness on social media, encouraging participants to post social media updates about the regional workshop.

2.4 Summary of Agenda and Activities

TABLE: Summary of Agenda and Activities

(Refer to the Appendices for the complete Agenda)

DAY 1 <i>Social Media, Policy Banks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social Media Briefing and Training• Official Opening of the Regional Workshop• Agriculture Policy Banks insights and participant ideas for outreach
DAY 2 <i>Country Presentations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentations from each country about Policy Banks and knowledge management approaches• Social Media 'ice breaker' Twitter session• PAPP Knowledge Management (KM) products to support farmers• SPC Library site visit
DAY 3 <i>Knowledge Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group exercise for participants to nominate best media channels in-country to promote policy banks• PAPP regional KM products, ie PAFNet• Other regional KM tools, ie UNDP PSE, USP e-learning, ADB information transparency• Knowledge management and the CTA KM Tree• Personalised technical assistance from PAPP to each country to progress its Agriculture Policy Bank
DAY 4 <i>Showcase Event</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group exercise for the KM Tree• Showcase of the Agricultural Policy Bank featuring international and local dignitaries

3.0 PARTICIPANTS

About 30 people attended the workshop, including SPC staff, plus additional attendees including guest speakers invited to join as participants for the knowledge management sessions. The final day's showcase attracted about 50 people from national and international organisations.

Participants from 10 of the 15 participating PAPP Pacific Island countries accepted the

invitation to attend, specifically from Vanuatu, Tonga, Niue, Cook Islands, Solomon Islands, FSM, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste, Fiji and Samoa.

Participants primarily included agriculture ministry staff but from a range of divisions including mainly communications, information and ICT, as well as from policy.

Success stories on benefits of policy bank in the pacific #PacAgKM #Intra_APP



Caption: More than 30 people attended the Regional Workshop in Fiji. Photo by @S.Vilvilfare/CTA/SPC

Participant Feedback

At the conclusion of the workshop, participants were asked to provide their feedback on the presentations, content and outcomes via a Workshop Evaluation Form (printed hard copy). The form was completed by 17 participants of whom 94% agreed or strongly agreed that “The workshop purpose and objectives were clearly stated” (93.7%; n=17) and 100% said the “The training met my expectations.” A second evaluation form for the Daily Sessions was also completed, in which 100% of respondents agree or strongly agree that “having PAPP staff take time to personally liaise with me and review our country’s policy bank content and future plans was very useful” (n=11).

A full summary of the evaluations can be found at Appendix ‘6.4 Participant Evaluations’.



Photos courtesy of @S.Vilvilfare/CTA/SPC

Group activities and discussions to share knowledge across countries, formed the bulk of sessions.



Official Opening of the workshop by DDG, Dr. Audrey Aumua and Intra-ACP APP Coordinator Samson Vilvil Fare.



Participants showing off their Social Media skills in promoting the event on Facebook and Twitter



The Business Melanesia film crew was on-site filming the workshop discussions.

4.0 OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS

Participants were presented with a list of outcomes and actions for discussion and agreement, at the end of the workshop. These core actions are detailed below, followed by outcomes, as well as the additional recommendations raised during the workshop.

4.1 Actions

Listed are the key actions that were agreed or noted during the four-day workshop. This is a summary of actions discussed within the key Outcomes (refer to *Section '4.2 Outcomes'*).

Actions	Timeline
<p>Agreed that countries should complete the upload of all their remaining agriculture policies and plans onto their respective APB, in liaison and with assistance from PAPP (each of the 15 participating PAPP countries already has its APB presence on the PAFPN e-forum portal; www.spc.int/pafpnet). Of the 10 countries who attended the workshop, most participants brought “homework” of electronic copies of their national agriculture policies that were uploaded to their respective APBs and, as a result, most countries have updated banks, potentially ready to launch.</p>	June-Dec 2016
<p>Agreed that four countries have launched their APBs (or are about to launch) and that the remaining 11 countries should conduct their own APB launch as soon as possible, ideally in 2016, to ensure all policy banks are ready to showcase at the May 2017 Ministerial Meet showcase.</p> <p>Noted that following the extensive policy uploads completed during the workshop, most countries have updated banks and could, if they consider themselves ready, now “launch” their APB, e.g. link with a pre-planned national event that elevates the APB.</p>	July-Dec 2016
<p>Agreed that countries who did not attend the workshop, or who attended but were not able to provide their “homework” should provide all their agriculture policies and plans for immediate upload to complete their APBs so they are current and ready to launch (refer to <i>Appendices - 6.5 Summary of Presentations</i> for the full “homework” list, and documents still required).</p>	June – Aug 2016
<p>Noted that as APBs progress, there are ideal linkages with other country communication channels in particular the agriculture ministry’s website. However, only four of the 10 attending countries have current websites: Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu, while Fiji has an outdated website that needs a rebuild. Countries without a website include: FSM, Niue, PNG, Timor Leste and Solomon Islands.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Agreed on the importance of the self-management by countries of their own policy bank, from sourcing to uploading policies and plans. Vanuatu and Cook Islands volunteered to be the first to seek PAPP assistance and training, then Tonga.</p>	June-Dec 2016
<p>Noted that PAPP plans to create a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to assist and guide in-country staff to manage their respective national APBs. PAPP to draft the SOP for inclusion in the APB Outreach Plan (due Sept. 2016).</p>	Sept-Dec 2016

<p>Agreed to review the content of the APBs based on survey and workshop feedback from countries, e.g. more M&E; more translations; summaries; youth tab or navigation bar (sidebar) or tab; easier viewing of the <i>Sub-Sector Strategies</i> link; and more suggestions as detailed in the <i>Appendices - Summary Presentations</i></p>	<p>June-Dec 2016</p>
<p>Noted the APB Outreach Plan template is being developed by PAPP, which when completed will be available for each country to tailor and use to raise awareness of their APB. Outreach Plan to be piloted in Vanuatu (Aug. 2016) then the final version made available to all 15 countries (from Sept.).</p>	<p>Sept-May 2017</p>
<p>Noted PAPP's suggestion to investigate developing a regional Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) whereby each of the 15 participating PAPP countries could sign and commit to the priority importance of improving knowledge management for the agriculture sector.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Agreed on the benefits of using more social media to promote the APBs and knowledge management activities in the agriculture sector.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Agreed that PAPP use the workshop participant list to develop an e-list for agriculture KM knowledge sharing and discussions.</p>	<p>June -Sept 2016</p>
<p>Agreed that participants commit to being advocates of promoting improved knowledge management approaches to develop and grow the agriculture sector, to colleagues within their ministries, other ministries, private sector, farmer groups, etc. This advocacy included completing the checklist 'Tasks we can complete once home'.</p>	<p>June -Sept 2016</p>
<p>Noted that the Papua New Guinea (PNG) representatives advocated and requested for an agriculture KM workshop to be hosted by PAPP in their country.</p>	<p>To confirm</p>

4.2 Outcomes

The following Outcomes provided a detailed summary of actions and related deadlines, activities and future plans.

LAUNCH REMAINING POLICY BANKS

All 15 participating PAPP countries have Agriculture Policy Banks (APBs) content contained on the PAFPN e-forum portal, and the 10 countries who attended the workshop used the forum to ensure their policy bank content is up to date. To assist with this process, most participants brought electronic copies of their national agriculture policies to the workshop, where the SPC PAPP team uploaded the documents onto each country's policy bank. As a result, most participating countries have fully updated banks, hosted on PAFPN www.spc.int/pafpnet. This means most countries can now "launch" their Agriculture Policy Bank, perhaps via a simple Media Release announcement, small event, or perhaps linking with an upcoming agricultural event. At the workshop the remaining countries were encouraged to launch soon.

Of the 15 countries with APB information, two (2) countries have established and launched comprehensive banks, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, with two more about to launch, Samoa and Tonga. Tonga plans to officially launch its Agriculture Policy Bank on 18 July, with a two-day Awareness Workshop followed by an Agriculture Roundtable and other activities. Samoa is tentatively planned for August/September 2016.

SELF-MANAGEMENT OF POLICY BANKS

Countries will be increasingly encouraged to self-manage their policy bank, from sourcing to uploading policies and plans, as a result of targeted training provided at the workshop. Vanuatu and Cook Islands volunteered to be the first to seek PAPP assistance, to manage their country policy banks. Now most countries have their policies and plans updated, which is the most time-consuming aspect of establishing each national bank, it is ideal they take ownership of their bank's ongoing management. Participants agreed that country ownership is ideal and that PAPP assist with further targeted training to enable countries to update their own banks. Furthermore, PAPP is also planning to create Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to assist and guide in-country staff to manage their respective national APB.

POLICY BANK WIREFRAME (CONTENT) AMENDMENTS

Participants used and reviewed the current version of the Policy Banks and made suggestions for improvements including:

- A specific section or entry point for youth to be added to the APB website wireframe, such as a youth tab, navigation bar (sidebar) or pop-up box.
- Improve the ease of viewing content on the *Sub-Sector Strategies* link, which is a standard feature on each Policy Bank. For example, the Vanuatu Fisheries page contains the note "Fisheries Sector Policy under development" and so it appears there are no policies or plans in place, however, on the same page there is the standard *Sub-Sector Strategies* link that contains four (4) policies and plans.
- Countries to include Monitoring and Evaluation documents and samples, where possible. PAPP to liaise with countries to start including M&E docs.
- Countries to include translated policies and summaries where beneficial and viable.
- Countries to complete their policy hierarchy charts with similar designs to the one presented on Cook Islands policy bank

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media tools and channels are heavily used nowadays in private and public sector. Before coming to the workshops, some participants have already been active on Facebook and Twitter. Few countries have even established Facebook pages for their own agriculture ministries. A pre-workshop training session on social media resulted in some participants

using Facebook and Twitter for the first time and, collectively, the participants and PAPP team generating an incredible 600,000+ Twitter impressions. Participants were encouraged to create their own Twitter and Facebook accounts and continue the social media activity throughout the week. (*Refer to section '5.0 Media Coverage' for more details.*)

AGRICULTURE'S ROLE IN DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

Following a recent e-discussion from the PAFNet forum about post-disaster responses, participants discussed the central role of agriculture in each country's response to a disaster, particularly given the Pacific Islands' heavy reliance on subsistence farming for survival. It was agreed that the workshop should note the need to support the provision of more disaster preparedness, planning and recovery information to farmers and the agricultural community. An important aspect was that countries need to share more information and knowledge on their strategies in coping with the aftermath of a natural disasters. Ideally, perhaps also share across ACP regions, e.g. Caribbean, Asia and others with similar environmental challenges.

CREATE AGRICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE SHARING E-GROUP

Workshop participants were praised for their extensive knowledge sharing during the week, and encouraged to continue these discussions in coming months via online communications using an "email list". It is proposed that the e-list contain the participants' contacts, and possibly expand over time depending on the effectiveness of the information exchanges. This will be a trial. The aim of the e-forum is multi-faceted, from basic information sharing, such as the agreed "what next" checklist from the workshop, to long-term sharing of "news" about new policies uploaded, or perhaps complementary uploads or links about new census data, legislation or other topics of interest to countries given the benefits of sharing such insights.

ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS-RAISING

Participants committed to being advocates of the Policy Banks and other knowledge management (KM) processes, such as the CTA KM Tree concept whereby all aspects of an organisation or ministry need to collaborate to best share information and learning. This KM advocacy extends from tackling the challenges of knowledge management within their division and national ministry, to across-government and through other channels including extension, farmer organisations, private sector, etc. To assist raise awareness and use of Policy Banks, an Outreach Plan is being developed by PAPP that, when completed, may be adopted and tailored for use by each country. The Plan is tentatively planned for a pilot in Vanuatu (August) then the final version made available to all 15 countries (September)

TABLE: Tasks we can complete upon returning to our home country

DONE	CHECKLIST
Now...	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Confirm latest agriculture policies and plans are uploaded to the Agriculture Policy Banks
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Inform Ministry or Departmental colleagues about policies that are now easily accessible, in one place, on the Policy Bank. Explain how useful it is to see other countries' policies.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Liaise with Extension Officers so they know all your country's policies are now documented in one place and can be accessed in the field (where there is internet access)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Liaise with your manager to outreach to other ministries, such as youth and women, who may have cross-cutting agricultural issues. Link or cross-reference such policies on the APB
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Negotiate and confirm with management 1-2 people from your Ministry to be responsible for maintaining your national APB (commitment approx. 1hr per week, after initial set-up)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Use Ministry or Departmental communications and promote your national policy bank (e.g. newsletter, staff e-mail lists, website, social media, farmer groups, factsheets, etc)
In future...	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finalise your APB content, now updated following the workshop, and prepare its launch. Perhaps a simple Media Release announcement or an event as part of an ag workshop.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Refer to <i>Outcomes and Actions</i> of the workshop for longer terms actions, such as adding more translated summaries or more Monitoring and Evaluation documents.

5.0 MEDIA COVERAGE

1) TRADITIONAL MEDIA

A film crew from Business Melanesia attended the workshop and showcase event, with a DVD to be produced to depict the highlights of the event, including testimonials from participating countries and actions moving forward.

Newspaper coverage was attracted locally and across participating countries:

- Fiji Times Saturday 4 June 2016 - Two articles were printed in the Saturday edition.
- Vanuatu Daily Post, Saturday 11 June, 2016
- Tonga - <http://mafff.we.bs/632/>
- Government of Tonga - <http://www.gov.to/press-release/online-agriculture-policy-banks-upheld-as-key-innovation-for-the-pacific/>



Two articles featured in the Saturday edition of the Fiji Times.

A screenshot of the Vanuatu Daily Post website. The top of the page features the logo "VANUATU DAILY POST" with a traditional wooden mask. Below the logo is a navigation bar with links for HOME, NEWS, OPINION, GOSSIP, CARTOONS, VANUATU SPORTS, TOURISM, ADVERTISEMENT, CLASSIFIEDS, VIDEO, and VMM. A banner for "96 BUZZ FM" is visible. The main article is titled "Online Agriculture Policy Banks upheld as key innovation for the Pacific". The article text includes: "Online Agriculture Policy Banks are ushering in a new era of access to information that is benefiting individual producers and promoting growth in the Pacific region's agricultural sector." and "At a recent workshop in Suva, organised by the European Union-supported Pacific Agriculture Policy Project and the Pacific Community (SPC), countries heard how Agriculture Policy Banks are already delivering significant benefits." The article is dated Saturday, June 11, 2016, 6:00 am. On the left side of the page, there is a sidebar with a wooden mask and links for ARCHIVES, SUBSCRIBE, ADVERTISE, LINKS, NEWS, 96 BUZZ FM, WHAT TO DO in Vanuatu, and CONTACT US. On the right side, there is a "Submit Your News!" section and a "Local Deals" section with listings for "FOR SALE", "PERMANENT RENTAL STUDIO UNIT", and "ROOM FOR RENT @OHLEN FRESH WINDVT23,000".

2) SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE

A pre-workshop training session on social media resulted in some participants using Facebook and Twitter for the first time.

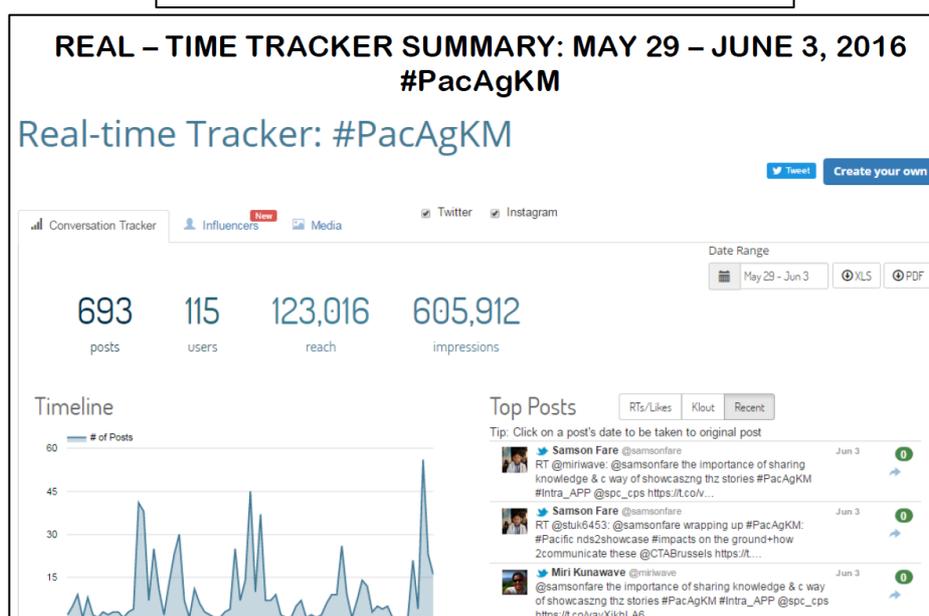
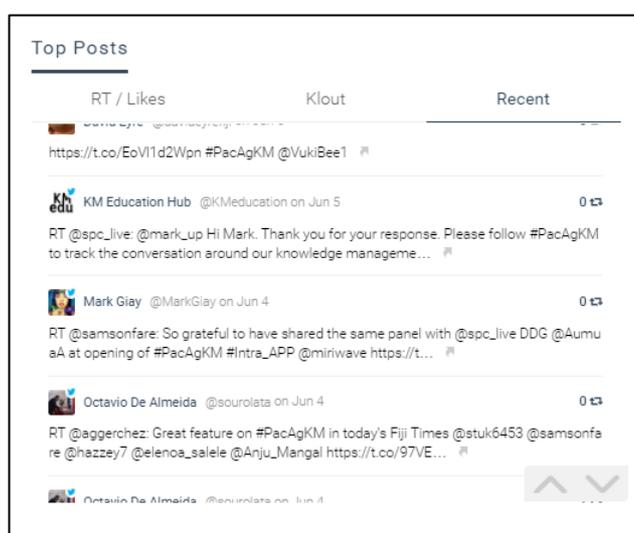
Twitter

Collectively, the participants and PAPP team generating an **incredible 600,000+ Twitter impressions**. Participants were encouraged to continue the social media activity throughout the week. Workshop Hashtags: #PacAgKM and #Intra_APP

As a result of the social media training and live coverage, most participants were actively tweeting. For example, Octavio De Almeida from Timor Leste, a first time Twitter user, was continuously updating his Tweets and tracking the conversation around the various sessions.

SPC Facebook and website

Significant Facebook activity took place, as a result of the pre-workshop Social Media Briefing and Training, with many posts not only on the SPC website and social media pages, e.g. Facebook, but also on the FB pages of participants.



6.0 APPENDICES

(Refer to separate APPENDICES document)

6.1 Agenda

6.2 Participant List

6.3 Workshop Objectives

6.4 Participant Evaluation

6.5 Presentation Summaries

6.6 Presentations in Full – complete notes from Notetakers (*separate document available upon request*)